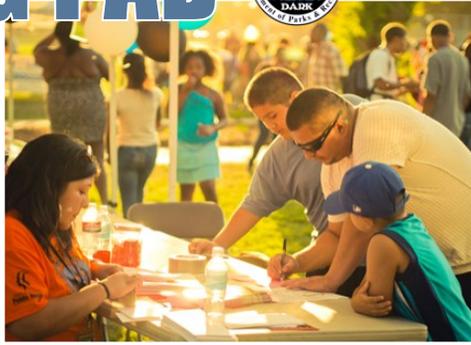




GREEN SCENE

October 2013

LAUNCHING PAD



Photos by S. Savanapridi

Another successful summer for a program offering Los Angeles County residents a safe, fun experience in their own communities.

In partnership with the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, the Department of Parks and Recreation, kicked off the enormously popular Parks After Dark (PAD) at six Los Angeles County parks on June 20, and successfully concluded the 2013 edition of the program on Aug. 17.

With a focus on youth and families, PAD offered surrounding communities extended park hours and activities on Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings from 6 p.m. -10 p.m. Activities included organized sports, resource fairs for residents of all ages, classes on acting and film and free concerts and movie screenings.

By providing young people and families with positive recreational activities in their communities, the initiative plays an important part in

reducing the likelihood of participation in at-risk behaviors.

Initially implemented in three parks as a component of the County's Gang Violence Reduction Initiative, the program transforms areas that have been adversely affected by gang activity into vibrant community centers that provide health and other resources in locations where residents can feel safe.

PAD was highly successful during its first three summers, resulting in decreased violent crime and high community participation.

Between 2010 and 2012, there were more than 120,000 visits to the PAD parks. A 2012 survey of participants found that 94% would participate in the program again, and 96% felt safe during the program. Serious and violent crimes in the communities

surrounding the original three parks declined 40% during the summer months between 2009 and 2012.

With support from the Board of Supervisors, the Los Angeles County Chief Executive Office, the LA84 Foundation and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, our Department partnered with the Department of Public Health's Choose Health LA initiative at these six parks: Ted Watkins Memorial Park; City Terrace Park; Jesse Owens Community Regional Park; Pamela County Park; Franklin D. Roosevelt Park; and Loma Alta Park.

A special thank you goes to the staff at these parks and all employees who contributed to the success of Parks After Dark!

– Catarah Hampshire



DIRECTOR'S DESK RUSS GUINEY

It has been the Department's pleasure to partner with the Department of Human

Resources and our healthcare providers to host several Countywide Fitness Challenge events in 2013. It is always rewarding to see County employees enjoying all that our parks have to offer, especially as part of this important effort to improve overall health and fitness.

Hundreds turned out for the year's first Challenge event, "Walk It Off!" at Whittier Narrows, on May 18. We have since had enthusiastic crowds of County employees at both Castaic Lake State Recreation Area (June 15)

and, most recently, the Hollywood Bowl (August 24).

At these events, employees have not only been able to receive important health screenings, but had the opportunity to take part in such activities as kayaking, dragon boat races, choreographed dance, paddleboarding and 3K hikes to picturesque destinations.

This fall, the 2013 Challenge closes out with stops at two amazing facilities. On Saturday, Oct. 5, Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area played host to "Take a Hike!" Participants were given the opportunity to take part in hikes at several skill levels, followed by

volleyball games and the opportunity to enjoy healthy snacks.

At "Play for Life!," set for Saturday, Oct. 19 at Santa Fe Dam Recreation Area, employees can test their mettle in our version of a "triathlon": a two-mile power walk through a wildlife sanctuary, a bicycle/buggy fun ride and pedal boat/kayak rides.

I want to extend very special thanks to all of our dedicated employees. You work so hard to ensure fun and wonderful events for all who participate, by making everyone feel welcome and helping provide them with beautiful surroundings and great resources!

GRANT FUNDING ENABLES INITIATIVES IN PLACERITA CANYON NATURAL AREA

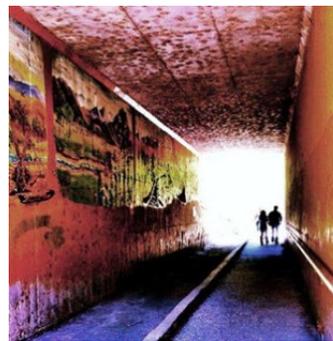
With more than \$570,000 in combined grant funding by Los Angeles County Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich and the State of California Habitat Conservation Fund, the Department is set to proceed with two initiatives that will yield immeasurable benefits in the beautiful Placerita Canyon Natural Area.

The projects – riparian habitat restoration and establishment of a Golden Braille Trail for the visually-impaired – enabled by the grant funding are meant to help preserve habitat in Placerita Canyon and expand opportunities for all people to enjoy natural beauty in Los Angeles County.

With a \$200,000 grant from the State of California Habitat Conservation Fund and \$300,000 provided by Supervisor Antonovich, the Placerita Canyon Riparian Habitat Restoration project will help protect and preserve the delicate ecosystem of the Placerita Canyon Creek, which is crucial to the

survival of diverse native species found near the vital water source. It will accomplish this in large part by creating a buffer zone to prevent trail users from negatively impacting the habitat. Plans also include planting of native riparian species.

Thanks to a \$45,000 State of California Habitat Conservation Fund grant and \$28,500 from Supervisor Antonovich, the Department will develop a Golden Braille Trail along the last 1/8 mile on the existing Heritage Trail (including the Heritage Tunnel, pictured). The Golden Braille Trail will include several features: installation of an orientation area, with benches and Braille signage describing the trail; audio elements; curb guides allowing the visually-impaired to independently navigate the path;



planting of fragrant and brightly colored (for low-vision visitors) native flora; high-contrast and Braille interpretive signs and interpretive opportunities through self-guided signage; and strategically placed points of interest to encourage a memorable experience.

The Department is contributing more than \$80,000 in in-kind labor toward the completion of both projects.

Thanks go to Special Assistant Faith Parducho, State Grants Manager Imee Perius, Natural Areas Administrator Kim Bosell, Placerita Canyon Natural Area Park Superintendent Russ Kimura, Crafts Supervisor Dwight LaCroix, the Planning and Development Agency and many others for their hard work to secure grant funds and move these projects forward. — *Andre Herndon*

WHERE IN THE DEPARTMENT



IS THIS ???????

ANSWER ON PAGE 6

20 YEARS



Susan Martorana
Regional Facilities Agency



Mike Ralston
East Agency



Ronald Smith
Regional Facilities Agency



Ross Varone
Administrative Services

25 YEARS



Sal Barba
Regional Facilities Agency



Gail Bedford
Regional Facilities Agency



Michelle Morgan
Administrative Services



Roderick Powell
Regional Facilities Agency



Arshell Stanley
East Agency



Arnold Teran, Jr.
Regional Facilities Agency



Anthony Withers
Regional Facilities Agency

30 YEARS



Irene Shobert
Administrative Services



Michael Young
South Agency

35 YEARS



Ruben Rodriguez
East Agency



William Roberts
Regional Facilities Agency



Joaquin Sepulveda
East Agency



Elena Wilson
South Agency

40 YEARS



Pete Cloud
Regional Facilities Agency



Frank Gonzales
East Agency



WELL WISHES



Retirement is a time to look back on a career and celebrate the positive impact an individual has made on colleagues and the community as a whole. By that measure, Kimel L. Conway — who retired in August as Regional Operations Manager for the Regional Facilities Agency — can spend his retirement reflecting on a job well done at the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation.

As Regional Operations Manager, Conway — who began his tenure at the Department in 1999 as Chief of Planning, and also served as Deputy Director of the Capital Projects Agency and Chief of Grants — played a central role in a long list of accomplishments. Among them: new operating agreements with the Los Angeles County Arboretum and Botanic Garden and the South Coast Botanic Garden; the William S. Hart Park Entrance Beautification Project; a sole source exhibit contract for Placerita Canyon Natural Area and Nature Center; the Virginia Robinson Gardens Terrazzo Terrace renovation; and construction of the LEED Platinum-certified Vasquez Rocks Interpretive Center.

“We will definitely miss Kimel,” said Chief Deputy Director John Wicker, at an Aug. 29 reception for Conway. “He was a conscientious manager and someone you could always count on.”

Upon his retirement, Conway was presented with scrolls from the Board of Supervisors and the Department — honoring him for utilizing his expertise and excellent supervision in a variety of posts, which have helped develop some

BUILDING COMMUNITY



On June 7, Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Chairman Mark Ridley-Thomas was on hand as Los Angeles County residents joined the Department of Parks and Recreation, LA84 Foundation President Anita DeFrantz, Olympic gold medalist Janet Evans and members of County swim teams for a summer swim season kickoff event at Alondra Community Regional Park Pool. This summer, the LA84 Foundation — which, like the Department of Parks and Recreation, places a heavy emphasis on water safety —



distributed grants to swim programs across Southern California. Said Ridley-Thomas: “The Summer Swim Program is a fantastic asset to our community. The hundreds of thousands of dollars the foundation provides each year to public pools flow to children who might not otherwise have access to swimming lessons or water sports.”

of the Department’s most impressive capital projects and facilities. He was also feted for serving with distinction while overseeing the operations of seven nature centers, four botanic gardens, three historic properties and providing management oversight of the Department’s 14 wildlife sanctuaries.

Said Regional Facilities Deputy Director Hayden Sohm: “I really enjoyed working with Kimel. His attention to detail and quality staff work was always appreciated. He cared deeply about the parks and gardens under his management.” — *Joyce Fitzpatrick*

**Parks
Make
Life
Better!**SM

PROCLAIMED

At a July 16 meeting of the Board of Supervisors, Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich held a special presentation in recognition of Park and Recreation Month! A beautiful scroll presented that day notes how the Department “Preserves and protects historic, natural and cultural resources, offers positive alternatives for youth during non-school hours, helps youth develop and grow into healthy, productive adults, strengthens community image, sense of place and cultural unity, provides access to the serenity of nature and outdoor places to play and exercise.” These accomplishments are cornerstones of our motto “Parks Make Life Better!” and the presentation is wonderful recognition of the hard work each one of you do every day!



IMPROVEMENTS COMMENCE AT EL CARISO COMMUNITY REGIONAL PARK



Los Angeles County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky was on hand Aug. 17, as the community gathered to break ground on the Phase II General Improvement Project at El Cariso Regional Park in Sylmar.

More than \$13 million in upgrades at the popular park will include several exciting elements: a Universal Access Playground; artificial turf soccer field with bleachers; natural turf practice field; new concession stands and restrooms; handball court; and a number of upgrades to pathways, picnic shelters, and landscaping.

The Universal Access Playground reflects a key goal of the Department: making play accessible to children of all abilities. Modeled after the nation’s first playground of its type – “Shane’s Inspiration,” located in Griffith Park – it will feature ADA-compliant pathways, sensory-rich play structures and independent play apparatuses. Tiffany Harris, CEO and co-founder of the Shane’s Inspiration organization, also attended the groundbreaking to show support for the project.

Special thanks go to Jon Gargan, Joyce Gibson, Jim McCarthy, Steven Dennis, Dinah Quinones, Rob Horio, Gary Dickerson, Jon Tietjen and the entire North Agency team for a great start to this exciting project! — **Heather Larson**



'O, HAD I BUT FOLLOWED THE ARTS'

Ladera Park’s newly-refurbished amphitheatre on May 19 played host to a performance of William Shakespeare’s “Twelfth Night” — part of a flourishing collaboration between the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation and the organization Inner City Shakespeare.



Los Angeles County Supervisor Don Knabe was among those on hand May 2 for a groundbreaking on the new \$18.1 million Rowland Heights Community Center at Pathfinder Park. Due to open in Fall 2014, the 20,000-square-foot project will feature a state-of-the-art banquet room, computer lab, new tennis and basketball courts, landscaping, and additional parking. Thanks go to Joe Mendoza, Mika Yamamoto, Melinda Mayoral, Susan Brown, Letty Guerrero, Sam Adams and Jim Smith.

— **Catarah Hampshire**



ECO-RANGER CAMP EXPANDS IN SECOND YEAR

Building on a unique program geared toward helping young people develop a deeper appreciation of the natural world, the Department, with strong support from Los Angeles County Supervisor Don Knabe, kicked off a second year of the innovative Eco-Ranger Camp on July 15.

Dedicated to leadership development, environmental awareness and human relations training for 40 participants ages 13-18, this year's Teen Eco-Ranger Leadership Academy was expanded from one day to a full week prior to the start of the day camp. This was accomplished thanks to the hard work of a team that included Legislative, Community and Parks Foundation Liaison Joseph Matthews, and staff at four County parks serving unincorporated South and West Whittier: Sorensen, Adventure, Amigo and Amelia Mayberry.

Leadership Academy activities included Community Emergency

Response Team (CERT) training; a tour of Rio Hondo College that emphasized higher education and green jobs; a visit to a meeting of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors; and a trail improvement service project at Castaic Lake.

"Due to the success of last year's program, I am delighted that we expanded the Eco-Ranger Camp this year," said Supervisor Knabe. "These types of experiences give young people an opportunity to learn about nature and the environment in a hands-on and fun way. Hopefully, it will also expand their minds as they consider careers for their future and prepare themselves for the jobs of tomorrow."

The day camp included more than 200 youth, ages 6-12. Its programming placed a strong emphasis on principles of conservation, and reinforcing the unique role that young people play in protecting the environment. The topics covered included water conservation; recycling; alternative energy aware-

ness; preservation of natural resources; and lessons on local ecosystems, plant and animal habitats.

Among the activities in the week-long series of environmental awareness workshops and field trips, which began July 22: a trip to Dockweiler State Beach, where campers swam in the ocean and took part in a beach cleanup service project; and a week-ending, overnight trip to Castaic Lake State Recreation Area – where participants saw animal demonstrations, participated in nature hikes and experienced camping, some for the very first time.

Special thanks goes to many Department staff, including: Faith Parducho, Susan Brown, Bryan Spragg, Dingo Mercado, Alva Eagle, Michael Hamilton, Glenda Estevez, Marissa Castro, Beto Lopez, Mary Hernandez, Juan Carcamo, Lulu Hernandez and Lori Bennett.

– *Andre Herndon*

WHERE IN THE DEPARTMENT

ANSWER—This is a detail shot of "Ocean Journey," a sea-themed mosaic mural created in 2008 by brothers Matt and Paul Doolin of Topanga Art Tile and Design. Constructed from both handmade and factory made tiles, the mural was a Los Angeles County Arts Commission project and is located just outside the pool house at George Washington Carver Park. More information about the artists and the piece can be found at the Los Angeles County Arts Commission website. <http://www.lacountyarts.org/civcart/projectdetails/id/105> — *Ansley B. Davies*



COMMUNITY DIVES INTO NEW CASTAIC SPORTS COMPLEX AQUATIC CENTER



Hundreds of residents, community leaders, and excited young people turned out on May 31 for the Grand Opening and Dedication of the Castaic Sports Complex Aquatic Center.

Los Angeles County Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich was among those on hand to help dedicate the Aquatic Center. An exciting addition to the Castaic community, the \$13 million aquatic center is the result of a dynamic joint effort by Supervisor Antonovich, the Department of Parks and Recreation, the Department of Public Works and the Los Angeles County Arts Commission.

Featuring a competition-sized 6,425 square foot pool, splash pad with integrated 4,435 square-foot recreation pool and 12,500 square-foot pool building, the aquatic center has proven to be a popular draw for the local community. Programs and services available at the center include swimming lessons, a junior

lifeguard program, aqua aerobics, synchronized swimming and much more.

Marking the entrance to the aquatic center is artwork by renowned Los Angeles visual artist Bob Zoell. The piece, entitled "Bubbles," consists of 21 glass panels depicting bubbles in water. To create the large-scale artwork's rich blue color, Zoell's fabricator used a process that involves melting ceramic glaze at an extremely high temperature. Each glass panel is sandwiched between clear glass in one inch thick insulated glass units, making the design and construction of the artwork consistent with the project's goals for LEED Silver Certification.

Thanks go to Jon Gargan, Joyce Gibson, Jim McCarthy, Steven Dennis, Don Houston, Gary Dickerson, Trevor Zemp and all in the North Agency who have made this aquatic center such a hit with the Castaic community!

– Heather Larson

NEW FUTSAL COURTS THRILL SOCCER ENTHUSIASTS

Adding an exciting new element to our competitive sports offerings, the Department, with support from Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Chairman Mark Ridley-Thomas and the LA84 Foundation, officially opened futsal courts at two parks on July 6.

Located at Col. Leon H. Washington Park and Lennox Park, the courts are the first of their kind in the Department.

With usage of soccer-friendly fields at an all-time high, county officials emphasized the importance of delivering new recreational opportunities to players.

"Many of our parks were not built with soccer in mind," said Ridley-Thomas. "So, we had to be creative in designing new



features to accommodate all of the aspiring soccer players in these communities. The state-of-the-art futsal courts will be a tremendous asset to these parks."

On July 6, hundreds attended a grand opening celebration at the Lennox Park courts. Members of the Chivas USA professional soccer team hosted a clinic aimed at teaching young people the basics of this fast-paced game -- which is played by five-a-side squads on a turf court, and features a ball smaller than the one used

for traditional soccer. In total, the facilities provide three adult-size futsal courts, each roughly one-quarter of the size of an average professional soccer field, that can be converted as needed into six courts tailored for children.

Special thanks go to Joe Mendoza, Mika Yamamoto, Melinda Mayoral, Kevin Murray, Jerome Johnson, Lourdes Flores and all South Agency staff who helped bring this new amenity to the communities we serve!

– Catarah Hampshire

MAKING A SPLASH AT EUGENE A. OBREGON PARK



With festive decorations, synchronized swimming and diving demonstrations and hundreds of residents in attendance, the June 15 reopening of the Eugene A. Obregon Park Pool was a day of celebration for the East Los Angeles community.

The morning was highlighted by an appearance by Los Angeles County Supervisor Gloria Molina, a key supporter of the \$3.6 million in improvements that include an ADA-compliant pool building; family changing

room; refurbished dressing rooms, showers and office; and a new pool lift. The depth of the pool was also increased to 13 feet to allow for more aquatic programs such as diving.

Originally built in 1969, the pool draws thousands of people each year for free recreational swim, low-cost swimming lessons and other aquatic programs.

At the pool reopening ceremony, the assembled crowd marveled at the skills of the divers and synchronized

swimmers — who provided entertainment and showcased talents and skills honed in Los Angeles County pools.

“This pool is a vital community resource, which provides healthy recreation,” Molina said. “And, I can already see East L.A.’s very own Olympic hopefuls!”

Thanks go to Frank Gonzales, Manuel Escobar, Richard Chang, Sofia Gavia, Rick Tang, Freddy Fernandez and all East Agency staff who helped with a great re-opening! — *Alba Ibarra*



VASQUEZ ROCKS INTERPRETIVE CENTER: A 'NATURAL' CROWD-PLEASER

Holding his toddler daughter, Ondine, Stephen Linsley was among the hundreds who turned out for a May 30 open house to celebrate the new Interpretive Center at Vasquez Rocks Natural Area Park.

Impressed by this exciting addition to one of Los Angeles County’s most breathtaking natural areas, Linsley told the County Channel that the new center celebrates “a place that preserves nature and animals and things that are disappearing — so our kids can come and see them, and experience them.”

The innovative, 3,700 square-foot center features live animal exhibits, a

state-of-the-art video component about the area’s geological and cultural history and exhibits chronicling Vasquez Rocks’ storied relationship with Hollywood moviemaking.

Some of the informative exhibits detail the history of the area’s indigenous population, and trace the story of the early settlers. Other upgrades include complete refurbishment of the historical 1,100-square-foot ranger station, which serves as comfortable office space for employees at Vasquez Rocks Natural Area.

At the open house, the new \$9.7 million facility received a warm

welcome from Los Angeles County Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich, who provided strong support to the project.

Special thanks go to Regional Facilities Agency staff and volunteers, who contributed so much to the Vasquez Rocks Interpretive Center project and its introduction to the community: Hayden Sohm, Kimel Conway, Sandra Dininger, Monica Chocooj, Debra Goodwin, Anthony Withers, Steven Laws, Smitty Crosby, Dave Stives, Linda Therrien and a host of others who gave their time and effort to making this such a successful event!

— *Joyce Fitzpatrick*

LAKE LIFEGUARDS TRIUMPH IN BAKER-TO-VEGAS CHALLENGE CUP



MEMBERS OF THE LAKE LIFEGUARD TEAM: Edgar Murguia, Senior Lake Lifeguard—Castaic Lake; Manny Barrios, Senior Lake Lifeguard—Castaic Lake; Adolfo Reyes, Senior Lake Lifeguard—Puddingstone Lake; Billy Kutyllo, Lake Lifeguard—Castaic Lake; Oscar Villagomez, Senior Lake Lifeguard—Castaic Lake; Sean Himes, Lake Lifeguard—Castaic Lake; Ivonne Garcia, Lake Lifeguard—Santa Fe Dam; Jose Maldonado, E. Section Team Co-Captain/Senior Lake Lifeguard—Santa Fe Dam; Steve Hernandez, Lake Lifeguard—Castaic Lake; Chad Ernsdorf, Lake Lifeguard—Castaic Lake; Matt Safdeye, Lake Lifeguard—Castaic Lake; Billie Bivens, Supervising Lake Lifeguard—Santa Fe Dam; Dylan Rudy, Lake Lifeguard—Santa Fe Dam; Rogelio “Roger” Castaneda, Lake Lifeguard—Santa Fe Dam; Micah Bivens, Senior Lake Lifeguard—Puddingstone Lake; Andrew Polgar, Lake Lifeguard—Castaic Lake; Sean Evans, Lake Lifeguard—Puddingstone Lake; Grady Kelly, Lake Lifeguard—Castaic Lake; Steve Evans, Supervising Lake Lifeguard—Santa Fe Dam; Cary Flebbe, N. Section Team Co-Captain/Senior Lake Lifeguard—Castaic Lake

Competing in daytime heat that pushed the mercury upwards of 94 degrees, the Lake Lifeguards of the County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation placed first in the Invitational Division of the 2013 Baker to Vegas Challenge Cup Relay.

Not only did the lifeguards win the Invitational Division, they excelled: In the 120-mile relay through the punishing Mojave Desert, they set a new team record with a time of 14 hours, 22 minutes – earning fourth place overall in a field of more than 260 teams from across the world, including squads representing the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and agencies from such international locales as Hamburg, Germany.

Chief Lake Lifeguard Hugo Maldonado said each runner on the 20-member team – which represents 200 lifeguards stationed at three of Los Angeles County’s recreational lakes – ran a leg of race that ranged from four to ten miles across the California and Nevada deserts. The race ended April 14 in Las Vegas.

JANUARY—JULY

PROMOTIONS WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF PARKS & RECREATION



Robert Guillen, Intermediate Clerk - *Administrative Services*
Derek Estes, Grounds Maintenance Worker II - *South Agency*
David Jallo, Regional Park Superintendent III - *Regional Facilities Agency*
Faith Parducho, Special Assistant - *Executive Office*
Thomas Lew, Accounting Technician I - *Administrative Services*
Vanessa Ebenezzer, Sr. Grounds Maintenance Worker - *South Agency*
Victor Tung, Accounting Technician II - *Administrative Services*
Mariano Menjivar, Sr. Grounds Maintenance Worker - *East Agency*
Alex Chiu, Accounting Technician I - *Administrative Services*
Alberto Gomez, Assistant Regional Recreation Director - *East Agency*
Sofia Gavia, Assistant Regional Recreation Director - *East Agency*
Sara Keating, Administrative Assistant I - *Regional Facilities Agency*
Sergio Bravo, Sr. Grounds Maintenance Worker - *South Agency*
Susan Brown, Assistant Regional Recreation Director - *South Agency*
Laura Jones, Recreational Services Supervisor - *Regional Facilities Agency*
Gustavo Gavia, Equipment Maintenance Worker - *Regional Facilities Agency*

Warren Pierce, Grounds Maintenance Worker II - *Regional Facilities Agency*
Grace Hu, Administrative Services Manager II - *Administrative Services*
Vanessa Paniagua, Administrative Assistant III - *Executive Office*
Julio Aguirre, Irrigation and Lawn Sprinkler Fitter - *Regional Facilities Agency*
Sok Tay, Finance Specialist III - *Regional Facilities Agency*
Tim Braden, General Maintenance Worker - *Regional Facilities Agency*
Tatevik Magakyan, Administrative Assistant II - *Executive Office*
Martin Rascon, Recreation Services Manager - *East Agency*
Elsi Mares, Administrative Assistant III - *Administrative Services*
Robert Gomez, General Maintenance Worker - *South Agency*
Rocio Gonzalez-Diaz, Administrative Assistant III - *Regional Facilities Agency*
Larry A. Lewis, Plumbing Supervisor - *South Agency*
Brenda Sanchez, Administrative Services Manager I - *Administrative Services*
Mark Reed, Irrigation and Lawn Sprinkler Fitter - *East Agency*
John Pepper, General Maintenance Supervisor - *East Agency*
Connie Gutierrez, Grounds Maintenance Worker II - *Regional Facilities Agency*
Daniel Yawn, Grounds Maintenance Worker II - *North Agency*

HIGH FIVE



RECOGNIZING YOUR SERVICE
TO THE COMMUNITY

This is to convey my sincere appreciation for your staff's efforts in offering Whittier Narrows Recreation Area and Castaic Lake State Recreation Area for the Countywide Fitness Challenge events.

At Whittier Narrows on May 18, nearly 700 employees and their families attended the "Walk It Off!" event. Your Parks and Recreation team, headed by David Jallo, Regional Park Superintendent, went above and beyond, resulting in an outstanding event! Many employees visited Whittier Narrows for the first time. We heard several comments about how grateful they were for the wonderful experience they had hiking around the lake, competing in dragon boat races, riding in buggies and surries, kayaking and taking part in hula hoop and jump rope contests.

On June 15 at Castaic Lake, over 800 employees attended the "Make a Splash!" event. Lori Bennett, Regional Park Superintendent, and your Parks and Recreation team did an outstanding job! Many employees visited Castaic Lake for the first time, and expressed gratitude for the wonderful experience they had hiking around the lake, competing in horseshoe contests, paddle boarding, kayaking and playing beach volleyball. This location is truly a gem, and we hope to hold events every year at Castaic Lake.

Your role is an extremely valuable one, and your team's dedication and collaboration is in the best tradition of County Service.

**Lisa M. Garrett, Los Angeles County
Director of Personnel**

We wanted to write and thank you for the quick attention and great work that your team did to improve conditions along the Lario Trail near the Tanzanite Equestrian Center in Paramount.

One of the programs offered at the Tanzanite Equestrian Center is hosted by the Shoestring City Ranch for Kids. Here kids get to learn about and work with horses, and after a suitable amount of training & experience, they may get to venture out onto the trail. Because of the

previously hazardous conditions, young riders were mostly limited to riding just upstream. Thanks to your recent work, riding in the other direction, down stream towards the new equestrian facility at the south end of Paramount, is now much safer for all!

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Trails4All, our friends at the Shoestring City Ranch for Kids, and the management of the Tanzanite Equestrian Center, (oh, and my mare, Valentine), we applaud your very prompt attention and quality work!

Jim Meyer, Executive Director-Trails4All



Lario Trail Before



Lario Trail After

Today's "swim meet" for the Arcadia Special Education summer program was wonderful. The students had a great time, but most of the parents were able to see the results of the great program provided to their students.

I have enjoyed working with all the staff at the [Norman S. Johnson] Pool. Every instructor and guard has been kind, patient and understanding when working with the students. I enjoy the swimming program every summer and look forward to continuing the tradition ... Again, thank you so much for all that your staff has done to improve the swimming skills of my students.

**Juli Kennedy, Adapted PE Specialist,
Arcadia Unified School District**



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DEPARTMENT OF PARKS & RECREATION

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Chief Deputy Director**

**KAYE MICHELSON
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GREEN SCENE

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